

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 FDRE-00 EB-07 PA-02 PRS-01

IO-13 MED-03 L-03 SCA-01 SCS-03 SSO-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 INRE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 /073 W

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O 201900Z AUG 76 ZFF6

FM AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2372

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

COMNAVFORCARIB ROOSEVELT ROADS PR IMMEDIATE

SECDEF IMMEDIATE

JCS IMMEDIATE

CSA IMMEDIATE

CNO IMMEDIATE

CSAF IMMEDIATE

CMC IMMEDIATE

CINCLANT IMMEDIATE

USCINCRD IMMEDIATE

USCINCSO IMMEDIATE

COMSC IMMEDIATE

MAC IMMEDIATE

COMDT COGARD IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS MARTINIQUE 0343

E.O. 11652: N/AD

TAGS: AEMR, PINT

SUBJECT: GUADELOUPE VOLCANO ACTIVITY

REF: STATE 207265

1. I HAVE PREPARED THE FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT WITHOUT VONSULTINGO
FRENCH AUTHORITIES IN GUADELOUPE. IT IS, THEREFORE, ONLY
PARTIALLY ACCURATE, BUT I DO NOT RPT NOT WANT REQUEST INFO FROM
THEM ABOUT THEIR NEEDS, EVEN FOR USE IN THE EVENT OF MAJOR
DAMAGE, IN THE LIGHT OF THEIR SILENCE ABOUT THE EMSRGENCY AID
WEOFFERED IN MY TELEX OF AUGUST 16. SO FAR THEY HAVE NOT
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REPLIED, AND IT SEEMS TO ME THEY WANT TO TRY TO DEPEND ON THEIR

OWN AND THE GOF S RESOURCES BEFORE ACCEPTING OUTSIDE AID.
CONTINGENCY PLANNING SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN WITH THIS IN MIN

2. MEANWHILE

THE VOLCANO'S ACTIVITY SEEMS TO HAVE REACHED A PEAK
AND LEVELLED OFF. NO ONE, INCLUDING THE BATTERY OF EXPERTS
OBSERVING THE VOLCANO, CAN TELL WITH ANY CERTAINTY WHETHER, MUCH
LESS WHEN, A MAJOR ERUPTION WILL OCCUR. THE CURRENT SITUATION,
WHICH REQUIRES CAREFUL MONITORING OF THE VOLCANO, MAY CONTINUE
FOR SOME LENGTHY PERIOD OF TIME, REQUIRING THE EVACUEES TO REMAIN
AWAY FROM THEIR HOUSES AND RESULTING IN A COMPLETE DISLOCATION
OF GUADELOUPE'S ECONOMY.

3. SO FAR, AND WE HAVE CHECKED ALMOST DAILY WITH FRENCH AUTHOR-
ITIES ABOUT EITHER THE NEED TO BEGIN EVACUATION OF ALL AMERICANS
FROM GUADELOUPE OR RESTRICT US TRAVELLERS FROM VISITING THE
ISLAND. ACCORDING TO THEM (AND LACKING BETTER INFORMATION,
WE CONCUR IN THEIR JUDGMENT) THE SITUATION DOES NOT RPT NOT
WARRANT THESE MEASURES. AT PRESENT THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS
THE EXPECTED ERUPTION WILL BE OF A SIZE CAUSING A TRULY MAJOR
CATASTROPHE. SOME SOURCES IN GUADELOUPE EARLIER SPOKE OF AN
ERUPTION OF CATASTROPHIC PROPORTIONS, BUT THEY NOW SEEM TO TAKE
A MORE MODERATE VIEW. MEANWHILE, UNFORTUNATELY, THE PRESS
AND RADIO PICKED UP THE FORECASTS OF DOOM AND GAVE THEM WIDE
PUBLICITY. WE HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT IN AT LEAST SOME
INSTANCES THE MEDIA HAVE WIDELY EXAGGERATED THE DANGER IN GUADE-
LOUPE. THE STORY OF AN EXPECTED TIDAL WAVE APPEARS ALSO TO HAVE
GAINED WIDE CURRENCY, ALTHOUGH AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, THAT
SPECULATION SEEMS TO HAVE ORIGINATED IN THE U.S.

4. ISSUES:

A. MEDICAL: IN THE EVENT OF A MAJOR CATASTROPHE, LOCAL MEDI-
CAL SUPPLIES ARE INSUFFICIENT AND MANY SHORTAGES WOULD LIKELY
OCCUR, ESPECIALLY THOSE FOR BURNS OF ALL TYPES, DEEP CHEST
INJURIES, ANTIBIOTICS FOR DIARRHEA AND RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS,
ETC.

B. MASS FEEDING: THIS WILL BE A PROBLEM THE LONGER EVACUEES
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ARE REQUIRED TO LIVE INNMAKESHIFT QUARTERS. FOR THE MOMENT THERE
ARE NO SHORTAGES, BUT EVEN IF THEY OCCUR, THE GOF COULD LIKELY
RESPOND ADEQUATELY BY SHIPMENTS OF FOOD FROM FRANCE.

C. POTABLE WATER AND SHELTER: SHORTAGES OF TENTS, BLANKETS,
COTS, ETC AND POTABLE WATER EXIST. SHELTER SUPPLIES ARE BEING
FLOWN IN FROM FRANCE AND THE FRENCH MILITARY ARE ASSISTING IN
THE WATER PROBLEM. WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING GUADELOUPE'S

EXACT NEEDS UNLESS WE CONSULT WITH OFFICIALS.

D. LOGISTICS: WE JUDGE FROM THE SMOOTH EVACUATION OF THE LOWER PART OF BASSE TERRE ISLAND THAT LOCAL LOGISTICS CAPABILITIES ARE ADEQUATE. THERE ARE SUFFICIENT TRUCKS, PRIVATE AUTOS, PUBLIC BUSES AND SHIPS IN THE AREA FOR EVACUATION IN ANY CASE BUT THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF BASSE TERRE.

E. COMMUNICATION: COMMUNICATIONS IN GUADELOUPE ARE GENERALLY INADEQUATE BY U.S. STANDARDS AND A CATASTROPHE WOULD RENDER THE EXISTING NET TOTALLY INOPERABLE. MAJOR HELP WOULD BE REQUIRED, IF THAT IS, OUR AID IS REQUESTED.
SHACKLETON

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